

MINUTES
MICHIGAN STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING
January 17, 2001
Lansing, Michigan

Meeting noticed in accordance with Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.

Present: Barton LaBelle, Chairman
 Jack Gingrass, Vice Chairman
 Betty Jean Awrey, Commissioner
 Ted Wahby, Commissioner
 Lowell Jackson, Commissioner

 Douglas Novak, Commission Advisor
 Jerry Jones, Commission Auditor
 Vickie Plummer, Executive Secretary
 Susan Keldsen, Office of Commission Audit
 Pat Isom, Assistant Attorney General
 Greg Rosine, Director
 Tom Maki, Chief Operations Officer
 Philip Kazmierski, Bureau of Urban and Public Transportation
 William Gehman, Bureau of Aeronautics
 Wayne Niles, Bureau of Finance and Administration
 Gary D. Taylor, Bureau of Highway Technical Services
 Louis Lambert, Bureau of Transportation Planning
 Jennifer Murray, Office of Communications
 Jacqueline Shinn, Office of Economic Development

Absent: John Garside, Commissioner

A list of those people who attended the meeting is attached to the official minutes.

Chairman LaBelle called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. in the Aeronautics Auditorium, Lansing, Michigan.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Commission Meeting and Workshop Minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Commissioner Jackson, to approve the minutes of November 30, 2000, as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

State Transportation Commission
January 17, 2001
Page 2

Announcements

Chairman LaBelle, on behalf of the Commission, wished Jim DeSana well on his retirement from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) (Department). Mr. DeSana thanked the Commission for their support of MDOT over past years. He also provided information on typical recipients of property taxes and other revenues from land development.

Chairman LaBelle and Commissioner Jackson congratulated Greg Rosine on his new position as Director of MDOT. The Chairman also welcomed Terry Gotts, Bureau of Transportation Planning, back to the Department.

OVERSIGHT

Commission/State Administrative Board Contracts and Agreements (Exhibit A)

Doug Novak, Commission Advisor, reported that approval of Items 17 and 43 of Exhibit A are subject to the completion of the internal review process.

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Commissioner Awrey, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Bid Letting Pre-Approvals (Exhibit A-1)

Gary Taylor, Chief Engineer/Deputy Director, Bureau of Highway Technical Services, reported on Exhibit A-1.

It was moved by Commissioner Jackson, with support from Vice Chairman Gingrass, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Letting Exceptions (Exhibit A-2)

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Chairman LaBelle, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Bid Letting Not Pre-Approved (Exhibit A-4)

After some discussion on the agenda items, it was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Commissioner Awrey, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Contract Adjustments

Gary Taylor reported on the contract extras and overruns, Exhibit B.

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Vice Chairman Gingrass, to approve the contract adjustments. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

MDOT's Five-Year Plan

Denise Jackson, Bureau of Transportation Planning, presented information on the development of the 2001-2005 Five-Year Road & Bridge Program. Ms. Jackson provided a draft copy of the plan, including projects, and asked the Commission to approve the document for finalization and distribution.

A slide presentation provided information on the program's innovations and efficiencies, goals, and expectations. Major investment areas include routine maintenance, rehabilitation and reconstruction of roads, capital preventive maintenance, bridges, passing relief lane program, capacity improvements, new roads, and safety programs. Information was included on Build Michigan III's strategy, funding, and main components. New to the five-year program this year is a rest area program, wetland mitigation and an aesthetics policy. This program is expected to be updated annually.

Commissioner Jackson congratulated the Department on including additional items in this report as requested by the Commission after last year's presentation. The Commissioner then asked that the next report include the positive and negative impacts of the program in one place in order to make comparisons. It was also suggested that additional information include items such as number of direct and indirect jobs established or required to support or maintain the program, number of road-related accidents or fatalities reduced by the program, the number of years the pavement system life has been extended, and hours of reduced congestion. Commissioner Jackson believes these types of items could have an impact on how this report is received by our customers in the future.

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Commissioner Awrey, to approve the Department's five-year plan as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Recess

State Transportation Commission
January 17, 2001
Page 5

Chairman LaBelle recessed the meeting at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2001-2002 Budget

Ed Timpf, Financial Operations Division, provided information on the budget request for FY 2001-2002. The report included revenue estimates for the Michigan Transportation Fund, State Trunkline Fund, Comprehensive Transportation Fund, and Aeronautics Fund, and highlighted the changes from FY 2001.

Chairman LaBelle reported that the Commission was mailed the budget information prior to this meeting and has had time to review the information provided. The Chairman asked that any significant changes made to this document be brought to the Commission at a future meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Awrey, with support from Vice Chairman Gingrass, to approve the budget request as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

POLICY

Intercity Bus Policy

Commissioner Jackson, who also served as Chairman of the Intercity Bus Service Subcommittee, provided the following. Because circumstances regarding capital and operating assistance have changed since the 1992 intercity bus policy was adopted, this subcommittee reviewed the current policy and has provided recommended changes to the Commission policy. Also provided were department guidelines that outline how the Department will run the program in support of the proposed Commission policy. Basically, the changes made in these documents are to enable Michigan citizens to have the opportunity for intercity bus transportation. Also, public transit agencies are prohibited from participating in traditional intercity bus programs. Further discussion was held on the proposed new policy and guidelines.

Chairman LaBelle thanked Commissioner Jackson for chairing the subcommittee and Commissioner Wahby for serving as a member. The Commissioners were then asked to provide any additional comments to the subcommittee prior to the February State Transportation Commission Meeting, at which time the intercity bus policy will be considered for adoption.

INFORMATION ITEMS

"Good News from MDOT" Brochure

Lou Lambert, Deputy Director, Bureau of Transportation Planning, provided a copy of a brochure developed to note MDOT's progress and accomplishments over the past four years. Mr. Lambert expressed appreciation to all Department staff that provided information for this brochure, and to those who provided technical expertise in the development of the brochure including Polly Kent, Ann Clery, Gary Eisler, Chris Hart and Doug Ferris. He noted that the copies provided today were for demonstration and the Department will now move forward to have the brochure printed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

David Sharpe, a Northville resident representing "Families Along I-275," commented the Department was helpful during a reconstruction project on I-275 by tining the pavement to provide relief from noise levels. Mr. Sharpe expressed concern that other factors now affect noise levels and noted that a formal presentation will be given at the February 22 meeting.

Denny Snyder, a Livonia resident also representing "Families Along I-275," noted that prior to I-275 being rebuilt the road noise decibel level reading ranged from 65 to 73; after the road reopened the decibel level readings from the roadway have exceeded 83. Mr. Snyder expressed concern that these noise levels have had an effect on life styles and home values for residents in the area.

Larry Shoup, a Northville resident representing "Farmington Hills Families Near I-275," also expressed concern on the noise level from I-275 and suggested that the Commission include noise abatement in the five-year road program so that noise issues are addressed prior to reconstruction of roadways.

Fred Welsh, a Farmington Hills resident representing "Families Near I-275," expressed concern that federal laws on noise pollution do not cover highways. He believes the added traffic lanes, the speed limit, and lack of enforcement of the speed limit contribute to the noise problem.

Bob Risser, Michigan Concrete Paving Association, expressed concern that some have called for a two-inch asphalt overlay as a solution to the noise level on I-275. He reported that in the 1990s, a similar situation occurred in the Milwaukee metropolitan area which prompted a study to be done by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and Marquette University, to look at the texture of different pavement types and their impact on noise. The major conclusion of the study was that there was no difference found between the two pavement materials, but rather the texture placed on the surface. Another conclusion of the study is that the human ear cannot hear the difference of three decibels, and there were ten different types of concrete surface

textures that fell within the three-decibel range. One issue of the study was the interplay between road noise and skid resistance resulting from different surface textures.

Mr. Risser continued that traffic volumes and speed contribute to the I-275 sound issue and proposed that MDOT undertake a comprehensive study of this issue and look at all options available to bring relief to the citizens along the corridor. A copy of the Marquette study was provided to the Commissioners.

Chairman LaBelle explained the Commission is currently looking at the sound wall issue which will apply everywhere, and which is separate from the I-275 noise issue. He noted that the Department should look at any option available, along with the effectiveness and costs of those options, in relationship to the benefit received by the customer, including the traveling public that use the corridor and the neighbors that live there. The Chairman asked Director Rosine to begin an analysis on what options are available using the studies that have been done recently and technologies that are available from the pavement surfaces people, so that a decision is made with all data available and not from an emotional standpoint. He cautioned that the Commission does not want to move to solutions that may sound good but end up not working. Chairman LaBelle does not want to commit the Department, by precedent, to expenditures that may not be justified or that would over-commit the Department's assets in one area.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Legislative Update

Doug Novak, Legislative Administrator, Office of Governmental Affairs, provided a brief description of all the public acts of 2000 that relate to MDOT and provided information on the obsolete law repeals and pocket vetoes of 2000. Mr. Novak noted that he will be meeting with Director Rosine and legislative leadership to discuss transportation issues and legislative priorities.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman LaBelle adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Commission Advisor